

**Colville and Okanogan-Wenatchee Forest Plan Revision Public Information & Scoping Meeting**  
**July 16, 2011**  
**9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**  
**Community College/ Institute for Extended Learning, Colville, WA**

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**Meeting Purpose and Overview**

The USDA Forest Service (Forest Service) hosted a public information and scoping meeting for the Colville and Okanogan National Forest Plan in Colville, Washington on July 16, 2011. The meeting provided a combination of formats, including open house, presentation, question and response, and group comments. Sixty-six members of the public attended the meeting.

The meeting served two purposes: to provide the public an opportunity to learn about the Forest Service's proposals for long-term management of the Colville and Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forests, and to provide information on how the public can comment on the proposals, how their comments will be used, and to learn about future opportunities for their involvement.

**Meeting Agenda**

Susan Hayman, EnviroIssues facilitator, welcomed everyone and explained the meeting objectives, agenda, and meeting conduct. Laura Jo West, Colville National Forest Supervisor, talked briefly about the Forest Plan Revision process, the value of public participation in the process, and Forest Service expectations for the meeting. Laura Jo introduced the rest of the Forest Service's Forest Plan Revision team (Team).

**Presentation**

Margaret Hartzell, Team leader, presented the key concepts of the Proposed Actions. Since this meeting was held in Colville, Margaret focused on the specific proposals related to the Colville National Forest. She provided a general overview; a process timeline; and *new* and *continued* goals of the Proposed Actions for the following categories:

- Aquatics and riparian systems
- Plants
- Vegetation
- Wildlife habitat
- Access
- Livestock grazing
- Recreation
- Renewable forest products
- Scenery

- Preliminary Wilderness recommendations

Margaret also explained the “tools” the plan uses, as well as how comments are being gathered and used in the process. Please see Attachment 1 for the presentation slides.

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## Questions & Answers (Q&A)

The following is a synopsis of questions (Q), comments (C) and corresponding responses (R) from the meeting. *This is not intended to be a verbatim transcription of this portion of the meeting; similar questions / concerns were combined for summarization purposes.* Please see Attachment 2 for the transcribed flip chart notes.

### **Q: How does the Forest Service get its authority for what it does? Who influences policy?**

*R: The Forest Service is under the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The authority for the work the Forest Service does comes from the federal government. Beyond that, the people who can best answer your questions about jurisdiction and authority are not in this room today. This is a discussion best held at another time, and one that should involve your elected officials.*

### **What major changes are being proposed and how will they affect us?**

*R: The primary changes in the Proposed Actions relate to Key Watersheds (managing aquatic habitat); Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations (new; though current uses would be allowed to continue without expanding or growing until further action from Congress); and Vegetative Systems Management (increased focus nation-wide on restoration; ecosystems of forest; holistic management of various elements).*

**Q / C: Does Congress have legislation proposed for wilderness at this point? It's seems like it is all coming from Executive orders – I'm not convinced legislation will happen.**

*R: We are not aware of any Congressional action at this point related to these Wilderness recommendations.*

**C: Actions the Forest Service takes must be grounded in positive law.**

**C: I want motorized access to the Forest. This should be reflected in the Forest Plan. I am not physically able to get out and enjoy the forest with my family without motorized access. Wilderness designation prevents motorized access.**

*R: Wilderness designation is based on an analysis of capability, availability and need. Recreational opportunities and access affect availability. We understand that people want areas*

*to continue to be opened to motorized use. None of the areas currently open to motorized use are recommended for designation as Wilderness areas.*

**C: Wilderness designations destroy the wilderness, and they destroy job opportunities.**

**C: If you're only allowing a certain amount of timber harvest, it focuses the allowable timber harvesting to a much smaller area. This isn't healthy for the land.**

**C: Wilderness designation means no motorized use or chainsaws – limiting the availability of these areas for timber harvest. The Forest Service needs to make up the difference somewhere else.**

**C: Tripling the Wilderness areas and reducing the area available for timber harvest by one-third is not balanced management.**

**Q: Does scoping (i.e., public involvement) eliminate those areas that received prior review around roadless areas from the 1984 Washington State Wilderness Act? There was no discussion if they were significant or not for these current proposed actions.**

*R: The Roadless Area Review and Evaluations (RARE) was just a review – no environmental impact analysis was performed. Separate conversations about the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) can occur for those interested in further discussion in these details.*

**C: There is little to no mention of snowmobiles or ATVs (all-terrain vehicles) west of Barney's Junction in the plan. It's the largest recreation area – in terms of *use* and *percentage of use*. Previously, thousands of miles of access of "user-developed trails" were removed by being closed off. As a motorized community, we want fewer road closures, more harvest and more motorized opportunities – the opposite of what the plan proposes. You need to look more at cumulative effects. There's no documentation to show the loss in opportunities.**

**Q: Does the USFS have jurisdiction over this process? What happens next in the process and with decision-making? Who is the decision-maker after the Forest Service? Will our comments be used?**

*R: At the end of 2013, there will be a new Forest Plan. Your comments are certainly important and will be considered in the development of the Revised Forest Plan and alternatives. There is a specific administrative process to object to decisions. The Regional Forester for the Pacific Northwest Region is in the Portland office. Objections to the Regional Forester's decision will be reviewed by the Chief of the Forest Service. Objection can also be pursued through the courts. You are welcome to go to elected officials with concerns prior to our developing the final document.*

**Q: Does this project have anything to do with Homeland Security? Is the Forest Service under the Department of Homeland Security?**

*R: No.*

**C: IF the Forest Service doesn't have jurisdiction, this whole process is moot.**

**C: This process will be drug out for over two years. In the end, we may still have to go to court to get it settled. I suggest we get something on the ballot to ask if people in the community want change.**

*R: We are not aware of anything that could be done at a local legislative level to direct the Forest Service and its decision-making.*

**C: I'm not sure if our comments will really make a difference. Comments were made in the Olympic National Forest area, and motorized access was closed off to residents even though they fought similar plans.**

*R: We cannot speak to specific decisions made for other national forests. As a federal agency, we are interested in and committed to listening to your comments. We hope to demonstrate how we used past and future comments in the EIS. You can likely already see evidence of past comments / concerns addressed in the Proposed Actions. However, it can also be difficult to see these on an individual level, because the plan attempts to balance the collective opinions and values of communities.*

**Q/C: Does the plan accept global climate change as a scientific fact? Where did the climate change science used in the plan come from? I have concerns about the validity of the analysis. It is important that the Forest Service uses credible data and models.**

*R: Climate change science comes from a variety of sources. Additionally, research has been done within the Forest Service's own research branch, as well as universities and other organizations. It can be more difficult to understand how the science applies at a smaller scale – specifically to the Colville National Forest. However, we are confident that we would experience increased flooding and a higher snow line. Small changes have been documented already. There are also interesting predictions for Colville National Forest – the disappearance of two pine species by the end of the century and the doubling of acres burned by fire by 2040; tripling by 2080. We cannot approach the idea with site-specificity, but it is important that we recognize the concept and do what we can to allow us to adapt, as necessary. We can discuss more detail about climate change and the analysis at a separate time.*

**Q: In the interim before plan submittal (in 2013), how will the forest lands recommended for Wilderness be managed? What about after the Forest Service's recommendation and before**

**Congress's decision? Would an area be managed as Wilderness or by the Management Area that it is in?**

*R: There is different guidance: the Forest Plan itself and the 2001 Roadless Rule (inventoried roadless areas – IRAs) prohibit building new roads and limits timber harvest in these areas. A proposed Wilderness-designated area is considered “preliminarily recommended Wilderness” and would not be managed as Wilderness before action from Congress. We will continue to manage the proposed areas as preliminary administratively recommended wilderness. Existing compatible uses could continue, but we would not allow anything that would diminish the quality or eligibility of an area to be designated as Wilderness later.*

**Q: How would the Forest Service manage the areas surrounding recommended Wilderness areas? Will Active Restoration and other designations ultimately lead to Wilderness management?**

*R: Such designations will not necessarily lead to Wilderness management. Only what is designated as “preliminarily recommended” and inventoried roadless areas are considered at this time. We are required by Congress to consider these areas. We look for areas with no roads and no substantially recognizable timber harvest areas.*

**Q: Will this be the final evaluation for Wilderness designation in the Colville National Forest?**

*R: We cannot conclusively say so. However, it is a rare trigger that requires such evaluation. The last similar evaluation was done approximately thirty to forty years ago. However, individuals and groups (outside of the Forest Service) can request similar action in a separate political / congressional process.*

**C/Q: I appreciate the Wilderness experience and am concerned about crowds in the forest. What analysis has been done related to crowds and permits? Have you studied visitor use?**

*R: The Forest Service monitors national visitor use, which considers a stratified sample of visitors and captures the users' primary activity and all of the activities they do. That data is available for areas in, and some outside of, National Forest areas. Generally, there are fewer visitors the farther you go from a densely populated area.*

**Q: What kind of analysis has been done to determine the economic benefit of Wilderness designation, or of a balanced use of the forest? What does the data show?**

*R: The impact assessment phase of the process has not yet been launched. We are looking at existing data / research to show the relationship between Wilderness designation and economics. There is also a model that can be used to assign a value to Wilderness experiences that can aid in analysis.*

**C/Q: We need to provide abundant lumber and timber to benefit the public. How is the Forest Service responding to economic need and contributing to the economic well-being of the country?**

*R: We take economic issues and economic contributions to the local communities very seriously. There is a great deal of analysis that goes into Forest Service planning, and is specifically a major consideration in the revised management plan.*

**C/Q: The average per capita income in Ferry County is \$25,000. I have research that shows that forty to sixty acres of sustainably managed timber can create one new job. Does the Forest Service have data to show how many non-motorized tourists it would take to create the same equivalent value of one job?**

*R: Such evaluation would be done in the impact analysis. Multipliers are determined by the Forest Service research branch. Separate analysis related to this could be done. It may not answer the question exactly, but similar information could emerge. We would be happy to further discuss information you have related to this.*

**C/Q: I'm concerned the government is getting larger and we do not have enough private jobs available. How many new government jobs will be created through the implementation of the Proposed Action plan?**

*R: No job count has been evaluated associated with the development of the plan.*

**C/Q: Hunting provides a big economic boost to the area. Has the Forest Service been in consultation with the tribes about the Proposed Actions?**

*R: Yes, we have met with the Colville Confederated Tribes to go forward with the Proposed Actions. We will get into more details related to this as the process continues.*

**C: I would like to see an analysis of the value of timber above 5,000 feet elevation.**

**C/Q: I'm concerned that Wilderness designation does not help maintain wilderness areas. In your studies, how do you count users?**

*R: Forest Service staff interviewed users at the trailhead over a series of days. "Visits" are represented by an individual for a single trip.*

**Q: Are there any impact studies at present time or planned in the future that study whether the negative effect of humans would bar humans from being able to use the forest in the future?**

*R: No, not that we are aware of.*

**Q: Approximately how many acres are included in the Backcountry and Backcountry-Motorized proposals? Close to a million acres?**

*R: We do not have the exact proposed acreage of those areas at this time, but would gladly discuss more. For perspective, the entire Colville National Forest is approximately 1.1 million acres.*

**Q: Regarding proposed restoration, does the Forest Service remove roads from Active Restoration- designated areas? If roads are not in good condition would you remove them?**

*R: Generally, regardless of the condition, roads would not be removed unless the watershed or water quality – or some other resource – is being negatively impacted. If funding is available, we would try to improve them first, if possible. Also, the public has the opportunity to provide input if the Forest Service were to propose removal of a road. This is captured in a separate process – outside of the Forest Plan – at the local level.*

**Q: Does the Forest Service acknowledge the influence that international studies and plans are having on their Proposed Actions (e.g. Biosphere, International Union)?**

*R: We are aware of these studies and findings. They are considered another piece of information, and don't have any more influence than any other information we consider.*

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## **Closing**

Susan noted that the formal presentation and question-and-response session had ended, and that Forest Service staff would be available for further discussion and to answer any remaining questions.

Margaret and Laura Jo thanked everyone for their participation in the process, noting that their input will be helpful in developing plans in the future. They also encouraged everyone to submit written comments.

The open house reconvened for another 30 minutes. The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

A list of forest service employees and meeting facilitation team in attendance at the meeting is included in Attachment 3.

## Attachment 1: Presentation Slides

WELCOME!

### COLVILLE AND OKANOGAN-WENATCHEE NATIONAL FOREST PLAN REVISION

### PUBLIC INFORMATION AND SCOPING MEETING

July 16, 2011

Colville, Washington

### Informational Presentation

Margaret Hartzell,  
Forest Plan Revision Team Leader

NEWZ Plan Revision

### Agenda

- 9:00 a.m. Open House
- 9:30 a.m. Welcome and Meeting Overview
- 9:40 a.m. Informational Presentation,  
Questions and Concerns
- 10:30 a.m. Discussion Groups
- 12:00 p.m. Open House
- 12:30 p.m. Adjourn

NEWZ Plan Revision

### Why you should be involved

- ▣ Forest Plan Revision – Proposed Action public involvement
- ▣ June 30 to August 29, 2011

*Sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the  
Nation's forest and grasslands to meet the needs of  
present and future generations.*

NEWZ Plan Revision

### Meeting Conduct

- ▣ Listen actively
- ▣ Participate actively
- ▣ Discuss constructively
- ▣ Share question and comment time
- ▣ Turn off/mute electronic devices
- ▣ *Notify a facilitator or Forest Service staff if you need  
help finding something, or someone to talk with.*

NEWZ Plan Revision

### Plan Revision – the basics

- ▣ Managing expectations
- ▣ Bring current plan up-to-date
- ▣ Cannot make changes to laws, regulations, the  
directives, policy



Umbrella  
Operating framework for Forest

NEWZ Plan Revision



## Attachment 1: Presentation Slides

### Time Line

- This summer – Proposed Action
- Summer 2012 – DEIS
- Summer 2013 – FEIS
- Fall 2013 – revised forest plan



HEWZ Plan Revision

### Proposed Action

- Vegetation
  - New – role of disturbance in ecosystem; data on composition, structure, and spatial patterns
  - Continue – focus on ecosystem restoration and forest health, managing wildfire risks, contributing habitat



HEWZ Plan Revision

### Proposed Action

- Aquatics and Riparian Systems
  - New – Key watersheds
  - Continuing – good water quality, riparian buffers, healthy riparian ecosystems



HEWZ Plan Revision

### Proposed Action

- Wildlife Habitat
  - New – science to better describe habitat condition; ESA species
  - Continue – high quality habitat, connectivity, and contributing to recovery of ESA species



HEWZ Plan Revision

### Proposed Action

- Plants
  - Continue – preventing introduction and spread of invasive plants
  - Using native plants
  - Protecting unique habitats, rare plants, ESA species
  - Have healthy ecosystems



HEWZ Plan Revision

### Proposed Action

- Access – roads and trails, docks and bridges
  - Continue – safe, affordable, environmentally sound system of roads and trails
  - Continue – range of recreational trails



- NOTE on the Travel Management process

HEWZ Plan Revision

## Attachment 1: Presentation Slides

### Proposed Action

- Livestock Grazing
  - Continue – range lands in good condition.



HEWZ Plan Revision

### Proposed Action

- Scenery
  - New – system that emphasizes actively managing to enhance and maintain
  - Continue – provide beautiful scenery



HEWZ Plan Revision

### Proposed Action

- Recreation
  - New – additional data on recreation trends and use specific to Forest
  - Continue – offer quality, nature-based recreation in outdoor setting



HEWZ Plan Revision

### Proposed Action

- Preliminary Wilderness Recommendation
  - Continue – Salmo-Priest Wilderness – 29,000 acres
  - New – preliminary recommendation of 101,000 acres.
    - About 9% of Forest
    - Not final decision, existing uses can continue until Congress acts
    - Excluded motorized trails, mining operations, WUI with dry Forest, tools needed, not high quality



HEWZ Plan Revision

### Proposed Action

- Renewable Forest Products
  - Special forest products, merchantable wood products
  - Continue – provide firewood, saw timber, biomass, wood fiber
  - 25 to 35 mmbf and 10,000 acres per year on average



HEWZ Plan Revision

### Proposed Action

- Tool the plan uses
  - Management Areas
  - Consistent with neighbors
  - Habitats move
  - New congressionally created trail – Pacific Northwest National Scenic



HEWZ Plan Revision

## Attachment 1: Presentation Slides

### Commenting

- Today – gather information, ask questions
- Tomorrow - Send us comments specific to the proposed action, on-target, thoughtful
- Use comments to build options (alternatives) for plan



NEWZ Plan Revision

### How to Comment

- **Send comments to:**
  - Forest Plan Revision
  - Okanogan Valley Office
  - 1240 Second Avenue South
  - Okanogan, WA 98840
- Email: **[r6\\_ewzplanrevision@fs.fed.us](mailto:r6_ewzplanrevision@fs.fed.us)**
- Website: **[www.fs.usda.gov/goto/okawen/plan-revision](http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/okawen/plan-revision)**

*Comments are most helpful if received by August 29, 2011.*

NEWZ Plan Revision

## **Attachment 2: Transcribed Flip Charts from Question/Response Period**

- 1) Actions Forest Service takes must be grounded in positive law.
- 2) Wilderness recommendation will impact my access to the Forest (need motorized access).
- 3) Wilderness designation will impact timber harvest availability, and may impact other lands where harvest is allowed.
- 4) There is lots of ATV use; yet, the Travel Management Plan reduces motorized opportunities. Proposed Action Plan does not recognize increasing interest in motorized use.
- 5) Concern that motorized use is not adequately addressed; frustrated that Forest Service is not listening / ignoring input
- 6) The Forest Service has no jurisdiction to make decisions on Colville National Forest.
- 7) Are other decisions made within Washington state precedent-setting (i.e., Olympic National Forest)?
- 8) Values the wilderness experience
- 9) Balancing economic value of wilderness; wilderness can positively contribute to community.
- 10) Would like data to compare forest products jobs with tourism jobs.
- 11) Analyze value of timber found at over 5,000 feet elevation when addressing the comparison of tourism versus forest products jobs.
- 12) Wilderness hasn't been beneficial to everyone.
- 13) I question that Wilderness is used as much as data suggests.
- 14) Don't think the proposed plan balances the usage / needs of the resources.
- 15) I question the validity of basing the analysis on climate change.
- 16) Concerned about acreage designated as Backcountry (and Backcountry-Motorized) impacting timber harvest
- 17) Caution Forest Service to use only credible data and models
- 18) Government gets more jobs and bigger, in general, as a result of plans like the Proposed Actions.
- 19) Involve tribes in Proposed Actions
- 20) Asking Forest Service to acknowledge influence/ role of international studies and organizations in Proposed Actions.
- 21) The Forest Service should contribute to the economic well-being of the country.

**Attachment 3: Meeting Attendees***(This table includes only those who signed in. Affiliation and city/state were provided by attendees on sign-in sheets)*

<b>Public</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation (if any)</b>	<b>City, State</b>
Todd	-	Addy, WA
Bill	-	Colville, WA
Bill Allen	Panorama Gem & Mineral Club	Chewelah, WA
Ken Barker	Tri-County Motorized Recreation Association (TCMRA)	Loon Lake, WA
Dennis Bartlet	-	Addy, WA
David Batteiger	-	Colville, WA
Larry Beardslee	-	Republic, WA
Cecilia Biosca	Conservation NW	Colville, WA
Mike Blankenship	Tri-County Motorized Recreation Association (TCMRA)	-
Russell Bolton	Stevens County Assembly	Addy, WA
Bob O. Brown	-	Chewelah, WA
Martin L. Brown	Property Owner	Colville, WA
Almer Casile	-	Coeur d'Alene, ID
Lee Chester	-	Colville, WA
Doug Chester	-	Colville, WA
Don Dashiell	Stevens County	-
Jim Dellos	-	Colville, WA
Kinue Dellos	-	Colville, WA
Ray DePuydt	-	Kettle Falls, WA
Paul Due	Stevens County Assembly	Rice, WA
Lee (Dick) Dunton	Property Owner	Chewelah, WA
Kerry Earl	-	Chewelah, WA
Terry Foster	-	Colville, WA
Dave Gardon	Kettle Range Conservation Group	Kettle Falls, WA
Marc Gauthier	UCUT	Spokane, WA
Yvette Goot	Local hiker, non-motorized user of the forest	Chewelah, WA
Roland Hamm	Property Owner	Colville, WA
Bronwyn Harris	-	Kettle Falls, WA
Nancy Harshman	BCH/ access conservation T.NW	Colville, WA
Marlece Hart	Stevens County Assembly	Colville, WA
Bob Heath	-	Inchelium, WA
Annette Hepler	BCH, horseback forest user, hike, etc.	Chewelah, WA
Jeff Herman	-	Kettle Falls, WA
Helen D. Hokow	-	Colville, WA
René Holaday	Stevens County Assembly	Chewelah, WA
Myra M. Kay	Stevens County Assembly	Kettle Falls, WA
Amy Kegel	-	-

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<b>Public (cont'd)</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation (if any)</b>	<b>City, State</b>
Ardell Kingler	-	Chewelah, WA
Derrick Knowles	Conservation NW	Spokane, WA
Russ Larsen	SCPLAC	Colville, WA
Lorraine Marie	resident on private land surrounded by USFS land + several conservation groups	Colville, WA
Bill Mathison	Friend	Onion Creek, WA
Wes McCart	Stevens County Farm Bureau	Springdale, WA
June McCauley	-	Colville, WA
Richard McCauley	-	Colville, WA
Dave Olsen	-	Colville, WA
Erik Olsen	-	Colville, WA
Curtis Ott	Eastern Washington ATV Association	Addy, WA
Don Ponderson	Washington State Snowmobile Association (WSSA)	Deer Park, WA
Connie Potter	Stevens County Assembly	Chewelah, WA
Dan Price	-	-
Leonard F. Ringer	Ringer Land and Cattle Company	Colville, WA
Keith Ringer	Stevens County Cattlemens Association	Colville, WA
Oscar Romo	Stevens County Assembly	Colville, WA
Evelyn Romo	Stevens County Assembly	Colville, WA
John Smith	Colville Chamber of Commerce	Colville, WA
Sheila Stalp	Congresswoman McMorris Rodgers	Colville, WA
Jim Strong	-	Colville, WA
Cody Thueringer	-	-
James Thueringer	-	Colville, WA
Allen Thueringer	Stevens County Assembly	Colville, WA
Don Tryon	-	Colville, WA
Al Watson	-	Republic, WA
Mark Youngblood	Stevens County Assembly	Addy, WA
Linda Youngblood	Stevens County Assembly; Property Owner	Addy, WA
Tim Youngbluth	-	Colville, WA

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Forest Service Staff		
Name	Forest	City, State
Holly Akins	Colville	Colville, WA
Elizabeth Brann	Colville	Colville, WA
Bill Gaines	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Okanogan, WA
Margaret Hartzell	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Okanogan, WA
Debbie Kelly	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Okanogan, WA
Mark Loewen	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Okanogan, WA
Shannon O'Brien	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Okanogan, WA
Franklin Pemberton	Colville	Colville, WA
Mary Scholz	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Okanogan, WA
Tom Shuhda	Colville	Colville, WA
Lisa Therrell	Okanogan-Wenatchee	Okanogan, WA
Laura Jo West	Colville	Colville, WA
Facilitation Team		
Name	Affiliation	City, State
Caylen Beaty	EnviroIssues <sup>1</sup>	Seattle, WA
Susan Hayman	EnviroIssues	Boise, ID
Alissa VandenBerghe	EnviroIssues	Seattle, WA

<sup>1</sup> Neutral public process outreach and facilitation company ([www.enviroissues.com](http://www.enviroissues.com)) working under the auspices of the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution ([www.ecr.gov](http://www.ecr.gov)).